

Subject: Hawaiian coinage;
Medical medals

Smith, John Lawrence
[Los Angeles, CA]

1933

JOHN LAWRENCE SMITH, M.D.
126 NORTH AVENUE 63
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

November 11, 1933

To the Curator,
American Numismatic Association,
New York, N.Y.

Dear Sir:

I am a new member of the California Coin Club,
a very new beginner in the serious side of this science.

I beg your indulgence if I use an improper approach,
but some member said recently, that any numismatic query
would be answered by the Curator at New York. I shall
be greatly pleased if I get a reply to my inquiries.

1. Two silver coins of Hawaii, date 1883, lead me to
ask what was the extent of coinage in the Kingdom of
Hawaii. Was silver alone used, or was there gold and
copper as well. Are the specimens extant, at a premium?

2. I am desirous of learning of medals issued in
commemoration of physicians or their work. Does your
Association maintain an exhibit of medals, and are there
such specimens in the exhibit, if it exists.

3. A few specimens in my possession of ancient (or what
I fondly hope are ancient) engraved stones (seals) impel
me to ask how or where I can get an authoritative opinion
on them. I have one of the books by King, another by
Middleton, and the volume by Duffield Osborne. The more
I study the specimens, the more uncertain I become.

I wrote to the experts at the Metropolitan Museum
in New York, and received the reply that their rules would
not permit opinions on any work of the kind.

I wish to add that none of these queries have any
financial basis as to a sale. I may wish to acquire
specimens, but have no desire to sell.

Needless to say that I will heartily appreciate
whatever you may impart to me.

Sincerely yours,

John Lawrence Smith

November 17, 1933.

Dr. John Lawrence Smith
126 N. Avenue 63
Los Angeles, California.

Dear Sir:

The Kingdom of Hawaii had made at the Philadelphia Mint in 1883 dollars, half dollars, quarters and ten cent pieces. It was not a very large issue but probably sufficient for their needs, as American coins were current. When we took over the islands following the Spanish War what remained of these were melted down. These pieces are not rare but might be termed "scarce". It should not be difficult for you to pick up the four pieces from almost any dealer.

Medical medals have been collected at times by a few people in this country and Europe. A large, voluminous book on these was issued a few years ago by Dr. Malcom Storer called "Medicina in Nummis". This work was begun by Dr. Storer's father, Horatio R. Storer. By writing to Dr. Malcom Storer, 380 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., you could probably purchase this book from him. How much it would be I could not say but it would be several dollars. We have never gone into medical medals, although we undoubtedly have a large number but have never separated them from other medals. The two chief collections of these are in the Medical Library, the Fenway, Boston, and the Army Medical College, Washington, D. C.

Seals, scarabs, cylinders and engraved stones, both fake and genuine, are legion. Only one familiar with these could pass upon them. If you care to write to Mr. E. T. Newell, Halesite, Long Island, N. Y. or in care of this Society, he might possibly be willing to pass upon yours.

Very truly yours,

HW:JG

Curator